TRAFFIC CONGESTION

Congestion and travel delay are common concerns when considering highway performance. Congestion can be recurring (commuter traffic into cities, Friday night traffic to tourist destinations), seasonal (foliage viewers heading north), event driven (Winston Cup races), or caused by a particular incident (a crash on the Little Bay Bridge on the Spaulding Turnpike).

Traffic congestion in New Hampshire is measured in terms of Level of Service (LOS). There are five categories, A through F. The LOS A denotes free flowing, and LOS F means heavily congested. Level of Service is determined by comparing the volume of traffic on a roadway section to the roadway's capacity to handle the volume (based on traffic engineering procedures outlined in the Highway Capacity Manual). The capacity is based on roadway factors that affect congestion: alignment, lane and shoulder width, the number of access points, and others.

To ensure uniformity, the traffic volumes used for comparison purposes are weekday PM peak hour volumes (normally an example of a high recurring peak condition) throughout the state.

The chart below represents the LOS for the major state highways, including state maintained and numbered routes, based on 2004 traffic data.

LEVEL OF SERVICE DESCRIPTION	MILES	COLOR
No Congestion (LOS A and B)	1230	Green
Moderate Congestion (LOS C and D)	1190	Yellow
Congested (LOS E and F)	310	Red
Total	**2730**	

The accompanying Traffic Congestion Map shows a concentration of “congested” highways in the State’s southeasterly and south-central regions. Other routes, particularly those providing primary access to larger population areas, also experience increased traffic congestion.

A number of highway related projects proposed in the Ten Year Plan target this congestion. In addition, a number of non-highway related transportation projects are included to incrementally mitigate congestion and improve mobility to more efficiently move people, goods, and services throughout the state. The NHDOT, in cooperation with the Maine DOT and the Vermont Agency of Transportation leads an effort to implement Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) technologies in the Northern New England region to manage and operate the highways more efficiently, providing timely information to the motorists about travel conditions, traffic delays, and tourism opportunities. Such ITS technologies will again assist in addressing congestion. The NHDOT is currently constructing a traffic operation center to help monitor traffic congestion and to improve emergency response.

NHDOT's Statewide Transportation Model provides the ability to analyze future traffic flow in the State, and forecast the effectiveness of various transportation alternatives in meeting future traffic demands. As these technologies and alternative opportunities are refined and improved, traffic congestion and highway safety can be addressed more cost effectively as part of the overall appropriate solutions.

CONGESTION

New Hampshire DOT
Department of Transportation
Bureau of Transportation Planning

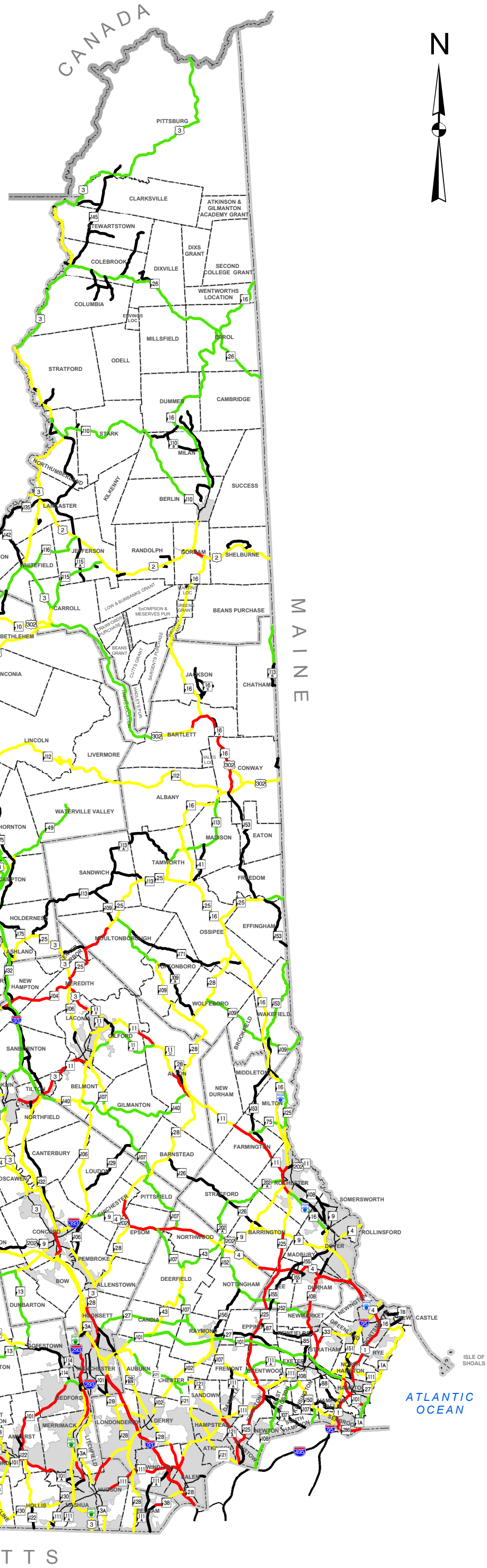
0 5 10 15 20 25
Miles

MAP BASED ON 2004 TRAFFIC DATA

CURRENTLY TRAFFIC CONGESTION ON NEW HAMPSHIRE'S HIGHWAYS IS MEASURED BY LEVEL OF SERVICE (LOS). LEVEL OF SERVICE INDICATES HOW WELL TRAFFIC FLOWS ALONG THE HIGHWAY SYSTEM. THIS MAP REPRESENTS THE LEVEL OF SERVICE AT PEAK HOUR CONDITIONS.

ALL LEVEL OF SERVICE ANALYSIS IS BASED ON CURRENT HIGHWAY CAPACITY MANUAL PROCEDURES, USING 2004 TRAFFIC VOLUME DATA AND ROADWAY GEOMETRICS THAT AFFECT CONGESTION.

- NO CONGESTION (LOS - A & B) 1233 MILES
- MODERATE CONGESTION (LOS - C & D) 1190 MILES
- CONGESTION (LOS - E & F) 306 MILES
- NOT RATED
- URBAN AREA (2000)



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